Removal of Child Labour from Hazardous Occupation

2119. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that in the year 1993 Government decided to remove an estimated 20 lakhs child workers from hazardous occupations by the year 2000 in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and allocations made by Government for the purpose;

(c) how many child workers have so far been removed under the scheme in different States with State-wise details; and

(d) whether State Governments are cooperating with Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) A major programme for withdrawal of an estimated 20 lakh working children from hazardous occupations and their rehabilitation by 2000 AD was announced in August, 1994. According to the National Child Labour Policy, 1987 the problem of child labour is being tackled through (i) legislation; (ii) general development programmes for the benefit of children and (iii) implementation of the National Child Labour Projects. A comprehensive law, namely, the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 already exists to prohibit the employment of children in 7 occupations and 18 processes. In addition, for safeguarding the interests of children, there are protective provisions in various other labour laws such as the Factories Act, 1948, the Mines Act, 1952 and Motor Transport (Workers) Act, 1961 etc. The approach of the government is to implement all the child related provisions of these laws in a harmonious fashion. Government is presently engaged in the task of rehabilitation of about 2.00 million working children in hazardous occupations by the year 2002. So far 76 child labour projects have been sanctioned to cover over 1.5 lakh children through special schools where they are provided non-formal education, vocational training, supplementary nutrition, health care and stipend etc. Apart from this, a massive awareness generation campaign has also been launched against the evil of child labour at national, regional and district levels. Funds for awareness generation have been released to 133 most child labour endemic districts in this country to sensitize people against the practice of child labour. Allocations made for programmes relating to elimination of child labour during 1995-96 and 1996-97 is of the order of Rs. 34.40 crores and Rs. 56.00 crores respectively.

(c) 76 National Child Labour Projects have been sanctioned to cover about 1.5 lakh children in the child labour endemic states of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. While the State-wise details regarding working children removed from hazardous occupations are not available, it is estimated that around one lakh working children in these States have been removed from hazardous occupations and are presently in the special schools.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Bill to protect the Policy of Reservation for SCs/STs

2120. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal before Government to bring a Bill to protect the policy of reservation for SCs/STs; and

(b) if so, by when this Bill is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Bill on Reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is under consideration of the Government.